

PATENT

REMARKS

Claims 38-66 remain pending herein. Claims 38 and 52 have been amended herein.

1. Claims 38-49 and 52-64 have been rejected under §102(b) over JP '782 (Kako). In addition, claims 51, 52, 65 and 66 were rejected under §103 over Kako. These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Present claims 38 and 52 have been amended herein to clarify particular features, emphasizing the structure and functionality of the decal according to the claimed invention. Particularly, as recited, a ceramic member is provided having a ceramic substrate and a decal. The decal is provided on a portion of the substrate as a marker for labeling the substrate, and the decal has a different color than that of the substrate. Support for the claim amendments can be found throughout the present specification, particularly including page 4, lines 2-6. By way of illustration, the decal may be provided in the form of a barcode, which may advantageously provide data-rich identification of the particular substrate. Identification information may include data such as date of manufacture or process conditions, which data has already proved useful in not only the context of manufacturing, but in the context of customer implementation. By way of example, Applicant's customers have been receptive to decals in the form of markers for labeling the substrate for tracking purposes, particularly in the context of refractory ceramic members that are utilized in high-temperature furnace applications.

In contrast to the claimed invention, Kako is confined to disclosure of zircon coatings provided on a silicon carbide heating element. The coating is not provided in the form of a decal on a portion of the substrate, as a marker for labeling the substrate. Rather, the coating functions as a protective layer and is provided along the entirety of a surface of the silicon carbide heating element. Kako nowhere discloses or even remotely suggests modification of such a coating to provide a decal as claimed. Clearly, no indicia or other identifying information are embedded in or otherwise a portion of the coating. Furthermore, modification of the disclosed zircon coating to form a decal is not even remotely suggested by this reference, and would not have been carried out by one of ordinary skill in the art. As described, the functionality of the coating according to Kako is to provide a protective layer. Reconfiguration of the coating to be form of a decal, such as a barcode, would destroy this functionality.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the presently claimed invention is not anticipated by and is not obvious over Kako. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the art rejections over Kako are respectfully requested.

2. Claims 38-49 and 51-64 were rejected under §102(e) over Wang. In addition, claims 51, 52, 65 and 66 were rejected under §103 over Wang. These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Applicant respectfully submits that the reliance upon Wang is misplaced for the reasons advanced above with respect to Kako. Particularly, the zircon coating disclosed by Wang is in the form of a continuous coating to provide thermal protection on a silicon-containing substrate. There is no disclosure or even a hint or suggestion of modification of such a coating to provide a decal as claimed. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the art rejections over Wang are respectfully requested as well.

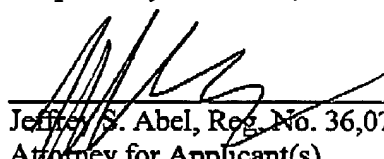
Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the Applicant would be desirable for placing this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

1/19/05


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